

Lexington Caucasian.

PULASKI.

A Legend of the Revolution.

It was at the battle of Brandywine that Count Pulaski squared in his glory. As he rode charging into the thickest of the battle, he was a warrior in full spurs, and never forgot. Mounting a grey black horse, whose strength and beauty of some might have rivaled the panthers of the capricious Pulaski himself, with a horn set in his breast, his sabre, and funds of iron, was attired in a white uniform, that was soon from side to side, in the shock of battle. His hair, grey with the years of 75, had the hue of a hawk who had seen much trouble, and was winged. It was exchanged in an instant of thinking, and the sword of Pulaski, in his right hand, was increased by a thick musket, he carried, and one more recent, was a heavy broadsword. He had lost in his career, from Pulaski, the conqueror's cap, and was wearing a plumed helmet.

He was at the battle of Brandywine following by a band of three hundred men, whose fame, burned with the scorching of a tropic sun, or hardened by northern winters, bore the scars of many a battle. They were mostly Hungarians, some Germans, some Poles, some soldiers from the British army. To be taken by the British would be death, and death on the gibbet; therefore, they fought to the last gasp, rather than mutter about "quarter." When they charged, it was as one man, their three hundred swords flashing over their heads against the clouds of battle. They came down upon the enemy in terrible silence, without a word spoken, not even a whisper. You could hear the tramp of their steeds, you could hear the rattling of their scabbards, but that was all. Yet when they closed with the British, you could hear a noise like that of a hundred hammers, braying the hoofs of the army. You could see Pulaski himself, riding yonder in his white uniform, his black steel rearing aloft, as turning his head over his shoulder, he spoke to his men: "FORWARDS, BRENDEN, FORWARDS!"

It was but broken German, yet they understood it, those three hundred men of sanguine faces, wounds and gashes. With one burst they crashed upon the enemy. For a few moments then the ground was covered with dead, while the living enemy scattered in panic before their path.

It was on this battle day of Brandywine that the count, who had no glory, he understood but little English, so that he spoke what he had to say with the edge of his sword. It was a severe lexicon, but the British soon learned to read it, and to know it, and to fear it. All over the field yonder quaker meeting-house, away to the top of Osborne's Hill, the soldiers of the enemy saw Pulaski come, and learned to know his name by heart. That white uniform, that bronzed visage, that black horse, with burning eyes and quivering nostrils, they knew the warrior well; they trembled when they heard him say: "Forwards, Brander, forwards!"

It was in the retreat of Brandywine that the Poleander was most terrible. It was when the men of Sullivan—badly armed, poorly fed, shabbily clad—gave way, step by step before the overwhelming discipline of the British host, that Pulaski looked like a battle hero, mounted on his demon steed. His right arm was still; it rested there, executing a British hazing when it fell—still his voice was heard, hoarse and husky, but strong in it, every tone—"Forwards, brander, forwards!" He held the division of Sullivan, retreating from the field; he saw the British yonder, stripping their coats from their backs, in the madness of pursuit. He looked to the south for Washington, who, with the reserve, under Greene, was hurrying to the rescue; but the American chief was not in view. Then Pulaski was convulsed with rage. He rode madly upon the bayonets of the pursuing English, his sword gathering victim after victim; even there, in front of their whistling array, he flung his steed across the path of the retreating Americans; he sought them, in his broken English to turn, to make one more effort; he shouted in hoarse tones that the day was not yet lost. They did not understand his words, but the tones in which they were spoken thrilled their blood. That fierce, towering, standing out from the clouds of battle, a warrior convulsed with pain, covered with blood, leaning over the neck of his steed, while his eyes seemed turned to fire, and the mailed fingers of his bronzed face writhed like serpents—that picture, I say, filled many a heart with new courage, nerves many a wounded arm for the fight again. Those retreating men turned—they faced the enemy again—like greyhounds at bay before the wolf—they sprang upon the necks of the foe and bore them down by one desperate charge.

It was at this moment that Washington came rushing once more to the battle. The people know but little of the American general who call him the American Fabius, that is, a compound of prudence and caution, with but a spark of enterprise. American Fabius! When you will shake hands with Roman Fabius had a heart of fire, now he has a soul, that hungered for the charge, an enterprise that rushed from the winds like the Sappho, upon the earth at Germantown, or started from the snows like that which lay across the Delaware, upon hordes like those of the Hessians at Trenton—then I'll lower Washington down to Fabius. This comparison of our heroes with the barbarian demigods of Rome only illustrates the poverty of the mind that makes it. Compare Brutus, the assassin of his friend, with Washington, the savior of the people! Cicero, the opponent of Catiline, with Henry, the champion of a consistent! What beggary of thought!

Let us then be a little independent, to show our great men as they were, not by comparison with the execution horses of our heroes, but in themselves. Washington was no vulgarizing, but an obvious and genuine. It was in the battle of Brandywine that the count was made plain. His men had been driven down by the British. He heard them strike his name, and regardless of his personal safety, he rushed to their rescue. Yes, it was in the dread horrors of that instant that Washington, rushing forward into the very center of the mass, was strangled in the center's grasp, on the top of a ring hill, and the scene of the most terrible carnage, while Pulaski was sweeping on with his troops in the darkness more than the edges of mud and mire. Washington was a terrible danger—the troops were closing at the moment the General comes sweeping up the hill and around him—while Pulaski, on a hill some hundred yards distant, was executing a parting between among the heroes of Europe. It was a glorious scene, the Major-General Washington in the heart of the British army.

Suddenly the Poleander turned—the eye caught sight of the iron-grey and his heart beat. He turned to his troopers, his lips wreathed with a grim smile—he waved his sword, he pointed to the iron-grey and his rider. There was but a moment. With one impulse that brood wheeling their war horses, and then a dark body solid and compact, was speeding over the valley like a thunderbolt from the sky—three hundred swords rose glistering in the faint glimpse of sunlight. In front of the avalanche, with his form raised to its full height, a dark form from whom a fierce smile on his lip rode Pulaski. Like a spirit rounded in the lightning by the thunderbolt, he rode—his eyes were fixed upon the iron-grey and its rider—his hand on one hilt, one short, for Washington. The British troops had encircled the American leader—already they fed wreaths of their prey—already the head of the traitor, Washington, seemed to dawn above the gates of London. But that trembling of the earth in the valley yonder. 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